

The Carnegie Museum, its Collections and Curators of Mollusks

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The Carnegie Museum opened in November of 1895 with Herbert Huntington Smith in charge of Invertebrate Zoology. At first the mollusk collection consisted only of Smith's, a general one, representing some 3,000 species. To this was soon added the collection of F. R. Holland, containing some 6,000, which included specimens identified by C. B. Adams, T. Bland, J. G. Anthony, and Isaac Lea. In 1899 Smith left to collect specimens in South America. During 1890 George Hubbard Clapp (1859-1949) was appointed Honorary Curator of the Department. He was a wealthy man, a trustee of the museum, with a special interest in the land and freshwater mollusks of North America. Between 1893 and 1927 he contributed 64 articles on mollusks to the *Nautilus*. In 1902, the important collection of *Partula* made by William Dell Hartmann (1817-1899) was purchased, along with his general collection of 9,000 species. His collection of the Hawaiian terrestrial family Achatinellidae had been previously sold to the Natural History Museum in Bremen, Germany. Smith, having returned to the museum, prepared an annotated catalogue of the Hartman *Partula* (1902). In 1903 Smith retired to become Curator of the Alabama State Museum of Natural History. There, through exchange and by extensive collecting, he built an important collection of freshwater mollusks.

In July 1903, Arnold E. Ortmann was appointed Curator of Invertebrate Zoology (exclusive of Insects), and the Carnegie Museum soon became a major center for the study of Unionidae. Not only did Ortmann enrich the collection with the specimens he gathered himself, but his reputation was such that he received unionids from almost all of his interested contemporaries. In 1904, the museum purchased marine shells collected by the *Porcupine* and *Valorous* expeditions from the London shell dealer, of dubious reputation, H. B. Preston.

In 1909 Victor Sterki (1846-1933) was appointed an Honorary Assistant in the department of Invertebrate

Zoology. His extensive collection of Pupillidae and Sphaeriidae, consisting of some 12,000 identified and catalogued lots had been purchased in 1906. Sterki worked mainly, in absentia, from his home in New Philadelphia, Ohio, though he and Ortmann were in the field collecting together during 1911.

Ortmann worked with graduate students from the University of Pittsburgh (which is just across the street from the Museum). During 1913 the collection of shells was moved to its present location and here Ortmann supervised the Doctoral thesis of Miss M. A. Moldenhauer on the Glochidea of Najades. Ortmann's most prolific student was Norman MacDowell Grier (1890-1951) who arrived in 1915 and "was assigned a table in the laboratory of invertebrate zoology, where he took up biometric work on the Najades of Lake Erie." Also present at other tables were Miss Moldenhauer and Miss. E. C. Carter, who were also working for advanced degrees. Grier received his Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 1919 and went on to make a significant contribution to the study of Unionidae. In 1922, G. H. Ball, another Doctoral candidate from the University, published his thesis on variation in freshwater mussels. This paper was done under Ortmann's direction. The latter suggested the project and the species used.

Ortmann died suddenly in 1927. Interestingly, after Ortmann's death neither Clapp, who was then 76, nor Grier, who went into other work, published anything significant on mollusks. In 1927, Stanley Truman Brooks (1902-ca. 1960), Ortmann's last student, was appointed assistant in charge of the department, and upon the receipt of his Ph.D. in 1929 was made Acting Curator. He and his wife (1931) made studies of the types in the collection. On January 25, 1933, Sterki died and his collection and library were removed to Pittsburgh. Ortmann's extensive library had been purchased by the Museum several years previously.

In 1933, Gordon M. Kutchke (subsequently changed to G. K. MacMillan) (1906-) became associate Curator. He held this post, with a few months off in 1944 for military service, until 1951, when he went into wastewater chemistry. He made contributions to the knowledge of land mollusks. In 1936 he revamped the type collection and found

67 overlooked by the Brooks'. Brooks left the Museum in 1946 on a year's leave of absence to work for the U.S. Military Government as a scientific specialist, and subsequently went into private business.

A new era in molluscan studies began at the Museum in 1951 when Dr. Juan José Parodiz (1911-) became Assistant Curator of Recent Invertebrates. He was not long in becoming full curator. Parodiz had spent 20 years with the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales, and was *the* expert on the land mollusca of South America. Parodiz began his tenure with a 10 year survey of the freshwater gastropods of Pennsylvania. He has followed Ortmann in his interest in the naiades of South America. He has published a list of the North American unionid types (1967), and has made numerous contributions to our knowledge of the land and freshwater mollusks of the Americas, the area which has always been the museum's greatest strength.

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The above notes are mostly gleanings from a perusal of the complete Annual Reports of the Carnegie Museum (1897-1975) and from: Abbott, R. T. 1973. *American Malacologists*. First edit. Falls Church, Va.

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